

WASHINGTON, DC - U.S. Congressman Mike Pence released the following statement today after House Republicans introduced the "Keep Terrorists Out of America Act:"

"Since 2002 Guantanamo Bay has held some of the world's most dangerous terrorists, many of whom were instrumental in plotting attacks against American citizens, including the attacks of September 11th. For more than seven years the Guantanamo Bay detention facility has helped keep America safe. Unfortunately President Obama ordered the facility closed without a plan for what to do with the dangerous terrorists being held there.

"The President's decision has put our nation in jeopardy and is irresponsible public policy. Americans deserve better. That is why I am proud to support the 'Keep Terrorists Out of America Act.' This legislation will provide each Member of Congress a chance to stand with the American people in opposition to bringing terrorist detainees into their states and communities. I applaud Ranking Members Hoekstra, McHugh, Smith, King and Ros-Lehtinen for their leadership on this critical issue. Congress has a responsibility to ensure that no terrorist touches his foot on American soil. With our military in harm's way, and our enemies still plotting against the American homeland, we must oppose the reckless release and transfer of these dangerous terrorists into the United States."

Background:

Affirming Congress' Opposition to the Release and Transfer of Terrorists. The bill affirms Congress' opposition to transferring or releasing terrorists held at the Guantanamo Bay prison into the United States. Most Americans do not support releasing these terrorists from Guantanamo Bay prison and transferring them into the United States. The bill gives Congress an opportunity to show that it stands with the American people on this critical matter, and opposes the release and transfer of these terrorists.

Governor & State Legislature Pre-Approval. The measure prohibits the Administration from transferring or releasing any terrorist detainees at Guantanamo Bay to any state without express approval from the state's governor and legislature, and certifies to Congress that strict requirements have been met. For example, the Administration must certify to the respective governor and state legislature that the detainee does not pose a security risk to the United States. The certifications must be made 60 days before any transfer or release.

Presidential Certification Requirements. The measure prohibits the President from transferring or releasing a terrorist detainee into the United States unless he provides the following notification and certification to Congress regarding:

- The name of the detainee and transfer/release location in the United States.
- The release/transfer would not negatively impact continued prosecution of the detainee.
- The release/transfer would not negatively impact continued detention of the detainee.
- The ability of federal judges to release detainees into the United States.